

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 050302

70/11

ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 R

DRAFTED BY ARA/CEN/G:DCLARE:RMC

APPROVED BY ARA:WGBOWDLER

ARA/CEN:GGOWEN

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ARA/CEN:DLAZAR

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R 061728Z MAR 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MEXICO

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL BELIZE

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 050302

EXDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y : P A R A 2 L I N E 6

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GT UK BH

SUBJECT: BELIZE DISPUTE: FEBRUARY 21 - 22 UK-Guatemalan

TALKS; UK-BELIZE DISCUSSIONS

1. UK EMBASSY HAS GIVEN DEPARTMENT FOLLOWING INFORMATION REGARDING RECENT MEETINGS ON BELIZE. SINCE PARTIES' SENSITIVITY ON POINTS RAISED EVIDENT IN DISSEMBLING ACCOUNTS PASSED US IN GUATEMALA AND BELIZE, PLEASE HOLD CLOSELY.

2. UK AND GUATEMALAN DELEGATIONS HELD ONLY ONE SUBSTANTIVE SESSION IN NEW YORK. GUATEMALANS REITERATED FEARS THAT INDEPENDENT BELIZE WOULD BE TARGET OF CUBAN SUBVERSION AND STRESSED THAT GUATEMALA REQUIRED WIDER COASTLINE ON GULF OF HONDURAS TO PROTECT INTERESTS. THEY FORMALLY PRO-
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POSED THAT GUATEMALA BE GIVEN TERRITORY FROM 16°30'S TO

EXISTING BORDER. UK NOTED PROPOSAL AND ASKED IF GUATEMALA WOULD RELINQUISH OTHER CLAIMS IF THEIR PROPOSAL ACCEPTED. GUATEMALANS DID NOT COMMIT THEMSELVES AT MEETING, BUT AFTER SESSION JORGE SKINNER KLEE TOLD UK REPS THAT BELIZE COULD THEN ,HAVE OWN WAY" ON FOREIGN AND DEFENSE AFFAIRS. UK EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT POSSIBLE MEXICAN REACTION. GUATEMALANS DOWNPLAYED PROBLEM.

3. UK REPRESENTATIVES SUBSEQUENTLY TRAVELLED TO BELMOPAN TO BRIEF PRICE, ROGERS, SHOMAN AND FONSECA. AT FIRST

PRICE ADAMANTLY REJECTED ANY TERRITORIAL CONCESSIONS, STATING THAT GOG PROPOSAL WAS JUST FURTHER STALLING TACTIC. LATER PRICE SAID MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO CONSIDER RECTIFYING CURRENT WESTERN BORDER SO AS TO RUN DUE NORTH/SOUTH AND "INTERNATIONALIZING, CORRIDOR 1-2 MILES ON EITHER SIDE OF SARSTUN RIVER. IN ADDITION, STATUS SAPODILLA CAYES NEGOTIABLE. BELIZE ALSO COULD GUARANTEE FREE PORT AT BELIZE CITY AND LAND ACCESS TO PORT. FINALLY, MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO WORK OUR JOINT GUATEMALAN-HONDURAN-BELIZEAN FISHERIES CONTROL IN GULF.

4. UK REPS PROMISED TO URGE GUATEMALANS TO ACCEPT BELIZE REPRESENTATION DURING NEW SERIES OF TALKS TO BE HELD IN APRIL. BUT UK SAID BELIZE WOULD NEED DEVELOP COUNTER-OFFER. PRICE, WHO ALREADY SLATED TO VISIT LONDON MID-MARCH SHOULD BE PREPARED DISCUSS COUNTER PROPOSALS WITH UK. INGERSOLL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DISPUTES, BOUNDARY DETERMINATION, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, MEETING REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 MAR 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: KelleyW0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE050302
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: DCLARE:RMC
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750080-1010
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750375/aaaacpwa.tel
Line Count: 88
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: KelleyW0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <25 JUN 2003 by MartinML>; APPROVED <04 NOV 2003 by KelleyW0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BELIZE DISPUTE: FEBRUARY 21 - 22 UK-GUATEMALAN TALKS; UK-BELIZE DISCUSSIONS
TAGS: PFOR, GT, UK, BH
To: GUATEMALA MULTIPLE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006